



DALLAS COUNTY
OFFICE OF BUDGET AND EVALUATION

August 29, 2025

TO: Commissioners Court

THROUGH: Dr. Ronica Watkins, Budget Officer *rw*

FROM: Vanessa Rodriguez, Budget and Policy Analyst

SUBJECT: FY2026 - 89th Legislative Session

OVERVIEW

The 89th Texas Legislative Session adjourned on June 2, 2025. Out of 9,012 bills and joint resolutions that were filed during this session, 1,172 were passed and sent to the Governors desk. Dallas County actively tracked 2,205 of these bills that had the potential to impact on our operations. Of these, 232 were passed and sent to the Governors desk.

Dallas County advanced eight legislative proposals during the session. Four passed and were sent to the Governor, representing a 50% success rate which is significantly higher than the overall 13% passage rate.

While many new laws affect counties statewide, several create unfunded mandates that will directly or indirectly impact Dallas County operations and budgets.

NOTABLE UNFUNDED MANDATES AFFECTING DALLAS COUNTY

Below is a summary of notable unfunded mandates with potential operational or financial impacts to Dallas County:

Bill Number	Subject	Summary
H.B. 40 (Metcalf)	Business Court	Authorizes a Business Court Judge to require the Sheriff to provide a bailiff while court is in session. The judge may also use another licensed peace officer. Counties may seek reimbursement, but upfront staffing and cost obligations fall on the Sheriff.

H.B. 171 (Guillen)	Court-Ordered Chemical Dependency Treatment	Extends the minimum duration of chemical dependency commitments to 30 days. Although HHSC is the lead agency, the Criminal Justice Department has reported both operational and financial impacts to counties.
H.B. 331 (Patterson)	First Responder Presumptions	Expands benefit presumptions for first responders, creating additional liability exposure. Human Resources reports an undetermined financial impact to Dallas County.
H.B. 334 (Ordaz)	Family Leave Pool Program	Authorizes counties to establish a family leave pool program for employees. HR reports potential operational impacts, but participation is optional.
H.B. 1306 (Landgraf)	Medical Examiner Benefits	Adds medical examiners, coroners, and death investigators to the list of employees entitled to special differential benefits and compensation for work-related risks. Human Resources reports an undetermined financial impact.
H.B. 4490 (Smithee)	Public Information Requests	Exempts next of kin information in medical examiner records from disclosure. SWIFS reports significant workload impacts, requiring manual review of records for most PIA requests. This could necessitate additional staff or result in processing delays.
H.B. 5436 (Bell)	Vehicle Title Exemption Fee	Requires the Tax Office to collect an additional \$25 fee and remit it to the State and requires mailing a notice to lienholders within 5 days. Tax

		Office reports a workload increase.
S.B. 8 (Huffman)	287(g) Agreements with ICE	Requires sheriffs to apply for federal 287(g) agreements. Associated costs include training for jailers, the Office of Budget and Evaluation has noted fiscal impacts.
S.B. 293 (Huffman)	Judicial Reporting and Compensation	Expands reporting requirements for judges to the Office of Court Administration that may lead to requests from judges for additional staff support.
S.B. 1023 (Bettencourt)	Truth in Taxation Reporting	Requires hyperlinks to all data sources used in ad valorem tax calculations. Tax Office anticipates a significant workload increase.
S.B. 1333 (Hughes)	Squatter Removal	Requires the Sheriff or Constable, upon request, to assist with keeping the peace during the removal of a squatter. May create additional operational demands for law enforcement.

CONCLUSION

The 89th Session produced both wins for Dallas County and new challenges. Several enacted bills create unfunded mandates, shifting costs to counties without providing new revenue streams. These requirements will need to be monitored closely, and in some cases, additional County resources will be necessary to ensure compliance.

Staff will continue to evaluate the impact of these mandates and bring forward budgetary recommendations.